

**VA****U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs**

# News Release

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May 7, 2015FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 7, 2015**May is Mental Health Awareness Month***New VA Website Encourages Veterans to Tell Their Stories of Hope*

WASHINGTON – May is Mental Health Awareness Month. To commemorate the month, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is encouraging Veterans, along with their families and friends, to visit and view recovery journey stories on the website, [MakeTheConnection.net](http://MakeTheConnection.net).

**Make the Connection** is a national awareness program operated by VA aimed at reducing the negative perceptions and stigma associated with seeking mental health care. Through the Website, Veterans and their loved ones hear from hundreds of other Veterans who may be experiencing similar challenges, learn strategies for support and recovery, along with local resources available through a resource locator.

Since the launch of the **Make the Connection** campaign in November 2011, there have been more than 7 million visits to the website, and more than 2.8 million people have joined the Facebook community or subscribed to the YouTube channel. The resource locator on the site, with information on VA and community-based treatment services around the country, has been used more than 220,000 times.

“We all have the ability to influence a friend or loved one in a positive way – that’s why Make the Connection was created,” said VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald. “We want Veterans to tell their personal stories of mental health treatment and recovery to as many of their peers as possible. Those stories can be great sources of strength for Veterans in need of hope.”

In addition to the Make the Connection [website](http://www.maketheconnection.net) and [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/VeteransMTC), information also can be found on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/VeteransMTC](http://www.youtube.com/VeteransMTC) and Google+ at <http://plus.google.com/+VeteransMTC>. Information about all VA mental health efforts may be found at [www.mentalhealth.va.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov).

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